

FIG. 31.—PLAN OF SALISBURY CATHEDRAL.

kinds, effigies of ecclesiastics, brasses, and cross-legged knights, this position showing that if they were not Templars they had joined a crusade to the Holy Land, were about to do so, or had otherwise assisted in it. The more modern monuments there contrast miserably with these supplicatory memorials, which are full of propriety, humility, and beauty.

How exquisite are all the details of the structure; how effective as a whole! Observe the elegance of the proportions,—the thought in the carvings, the variety produced by the plan, the play of light and shade, the effect of infinitude: "frozen music" is not an incorrect term for it. And yet for a long time men could gaze on this and other beautiful works of the middle ages, and regard them only as "heavy monkish piles." Our eyes are in our hearts. We see only as we feel.

I might dilate on what Milton calls—

— "The high embowed roof,
With Gothic pillars many proof,"—

those roofs where, as Wordsworth says, "Music dwells lingeringly, as loath to die," and point out to you their progress from the simple "barrel vault" in the early buildings of the round-arched style, to the wonderfully elaborate vaultings produced when Gothic architecture was about to expire, such as those of Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster, where—

— "From the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magic,"—

hang tons of stone most curiously fashioned.

It was long supposed, even by acute and able men, that caprice wholly regulated the design of Gothic structures; but it is now universally seen that they must have worked by a settled scheme of proportions. The equilateral triangle appears to have regulated these to a great extent. In this very cathedral it is particularly demonstrable. Cæsar Cæsar pointed to this system three centuries ago; and several investigators, both English and foreign, have pursued the subject in our own times. Mr. Griffith has carried it forward considerably, and shows some very interesting results.

Apart from their æsthetic beauty, how full of story are all our old churches, exhibiting the thoughts and feelings of the time in which they were erected! they are awakens of emotion, monuments of piety, storehouses of ancient art. It is scarcely possible to find one, however humble and unpretending, however disfigured by the fanatic or the "beautifier," that does not contain something to repay for the examination of it. Truly, "there is a sense of hearing that the vulgar know not."

The Fortresses and Castles of Great Britain

afford of themselves an interesting and distinct object for study. There are numerous examples left scattered over the country; the constructions of various periods, from the earth fortresses ascribed to the aborigines,—such as the Herefordshire Beacon on the Malvern Hills, in Worcestershire, and the remnants of Roman constructions, as Richborough Castle, in Kent, and Porchester Castle (infamously misused of late years)—down to the stately structures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, wherein security was less studied than magnificence, and the fortress merged into the palace.

An Anglo-Norman castle may be described as consisting of banks and ditches, with a wall occupying the top of the former, and flanked by towers enclosing a large area, called the outer baillium or court; entrance-gate towers, with a bridge across the ditch, and guarded by a portcullis, an inner baillium, separated from the outer by a strong wall, and a keep or donjon within that, complete the arrangement. Rochester Castle will afford you an example if you wish one. The keeps were ill-lighted and comfortless, security being the primary consideration. You will often find a well in the keep to supply water at the last extremity, as you sometimes do, by the way, in some churches in Normandy and elsewhere, which were connected with fortresses. The number of castles built in England a century after the Conquest was enormous.

As the times became settled, comfort was more attended to, and the rude keep, with a few subsidiary buildings, expanded into the magnificence of Kenilworth and Warwick. The stronghold of the chieftain often became the nucleus of a town. His dependants, gathered round the castle, gradually obtained intelligence, wealth, power, privileges; and, increasing in importance as the power of their lords grew less, ultimately gained the mastery, and saw the fortress destroyed, or placed under municipal control for municipal purposes.

It is interesting to see the Robber-castle striking its flag to the Town-hall and the people-calling Belfry. If you want examples, recall those you saw on the banks of the Rhine. As to discriminating the date of these structures, you will find what I have said, with reference to ecclesiastical buildings, to apply mainly to castles also.

It is unnecessary for me to repeople one of our ancient castles for you, although it would be a pleasant task to peep into the lady's "bower," the tilt-yard, the buttery, or the gate-house; to see the rude style in which the better classes lived, the coarseness of their enjoyments, the fewness of their resources, as

compared with those of the masses of our own period. The garnered intellect of past ages has been brought to bear on their actual advancement and welfare, and will be more so: machinery is doing their drudgery; every clime yields its produce for their use and gratification; locomotion is easy; life (the power of seeing, knowing, doing) is doubled with many, and may be with all.

The days of chivalry afford pleasant matter to read of: the institution itself did much towards softening men's manners, and preparing the way for a better state of society; but those were, nevertheless, miserable times, and we may congratulate ourselves on living later than our forefathers.

Yesterday it happened that I was in Carisbrooke Castle, in the Isle of Wight, where there is a fine gateway left, part of the, perhaps, Norman keep, the well, the place d'armes adjoining, and all the adjuncts of a large and important fortress: It is unnecessary, however, to trouble you on this. Its day is gone, its work is done,—

"The palace of the feudal victor
Now serves for ought but for a picture."

Where grim men of war assembled, peaceful parties pic nic, and the only reason for keeping the gate locked now is, that none may come in without paying a proper fee to the custodians.

When the nobility built residences instead of castles (and it is interesting to trace the steps by which this was done), rivalry amongst them led to the erection of some noble structures, which still adorn the land, and show the taste as well as opulence of their owners; nor were the merchants and traders of the kingdom long behind-hand in the race, and a vast number of important residences arose on all sides.

In the reign of King Henry VIII. and even previously, the pointed style of architecture had declined in England: its simplicity and beauty had given way before a redundancy of ornament heaped upon it, through a craving for novelty, and loss of knowledge of the just principles on which it had been produced and advanced. When, therefore, through foreign artificers who were employed in England, the

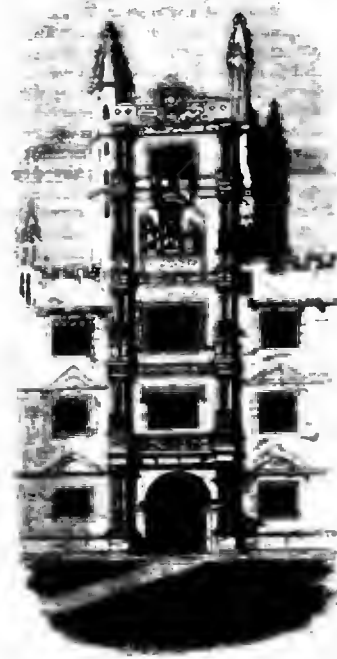


FIG. 32. GATEWAY OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, OXFORD.

revival of classic literature, and the exertions of travellers, examples of Italian mouldings and ornaments were imported, these, being easily imitated, were eagerly adopted, and were used for some time indiscriminately with the forms of the last period of Gothic architecture. In 1566, we find at Caius College, Cambridge,